

Avenues

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FUN AT WORKPLACE

NEWER ENVIRONMENTS Many companies today have taken initiating non-work activities seriously. (Below)



Work, fun & modern offices

Bindu Gopal Rao

Fun at work includes a whole gamut of activities like greeting card designs, theatre, dance, yoga, meditation, photography, poster-making, sports as well as activities that help social conscience! At Philips a group of employees from across sectors have come together to form a group called the Funoholics. This group brings in an element of fun at work by organising various fun events around birthdays and special events like Diwali and Christmas.

"The group of Funoholics at Philips tries to roll out events where participation and involvement is built on the motto of 'we receive to give'. They have done volunteer donation programmes and donation weeks across the country. Even the Christmas celebration focuses on how 'every employee can be a father Santa', where all goodies will be given to children from an NGO," explains Philips Electronics Limited Corporate Communication Director Moushumi Dutta. Likewise, Omega has unique way of engaging employees through its fun at work activities. "At the organisation level, we have a designated committee that organises sports and cultural events every month in both our locations. We celebrate one week called the Spirit week to commemorate Independence Day. Each day of the week is a theme dressing day. This year Omega Bangalore conducted Independence day with the theme of Crazy Dress day / Team Color day/ Crazy hair day/ Team Sports day and the last day as Ethnic day," Omega Healthcare Management Services Private Limited Assistant HR Vice-President P V Guruvayurappan.

Space for family

Family members are also part of activities in several organisations. It does seem that several employers are trying to bridge the gap between the home and the office and do not mind making the employee comfortable and 'feel at home' while at work! ADP's sports club recently organised a cricket tournament in which it was mandatory for every team to have at least one female player.

"This small twist added fun as well as ensured participation of the fairer sex. On the subject of gender inclusivity, ADP has been regularly conducting special workshops for our women associates on self defense techniques. The most recent workshop was an amusing yet learning affair due to the instructor's funny and friendly way of teaching simple yet effective techniques. ADP India continuously strives to be an employer of choice," ADP India Human Resources-Head Satyanarayana



People happy at work are also more productive

Vinjamoori said. "These initiatives act as a stress buster for work related tension and a packed action day. These activities are not only a subtle way to bring employees together but it is a way to chill and help new employees get attuned to unfamiliar surroundings. Fun@Tarang is self driven and immensely supported by the upper management.

"We strongly believe that a dynamic and effervescent work environment helps create a feel-good factor within Tarang and creates a positive and cohesive attitude amongst our employees. It also acts as the true source of high morale, a huge stress buster, creating a difference in the monotonous work schedule and aids work with a smile. This also plays an important role in forming the building blocks of the retention process at Tarang. We have experienced that the retention rates are better, when there is focus on fun at work. HR initiatives of creating such environment show the people that Tarang cares for them. Such initiatives provide a base to understand, absorb and integrate with the company and its culture. Also, binding our employees to the core value," Tarang Software People Development Manager Juliet Kukreja said.

Motivation First

A friendly environment is the best way to motivate and retain good people. Feel-good and fun at work is all about finding the right nerve to touch in every single employee and ensure that they get what they want.

"It's not about money. It's a combination of fun, rewards, recognition and most importantly, employees being a part of a common organisational goal and feeling that they are an important constituent to achieving that goal," Surya Food & Agro Limited Chief Managing Director Shekhar Agarwal said.

In fact happy workers are productive workers. Having fun while being at work enables an employee to enjoy his work and even make that extra effort. Working in a relaxed environment, adding the fun element to the work atmosphere helps makes the job a pleasure for the employees.

A right corporate culture conduces the full potential of the employees. It also acts as a great booster of employee morale, a stress buster, a change in the monotonous work schedule. Companies which provide a desirable and conducive working environment attract the best people to their organisation.

These companies are able to make the work environment very rewarding, taking advantage of the growing diversity of the working population. "We believe this to be one of the best ways to invest in our associates and thereby directly invest in the future growth and success of our organisation. The time invested in the various workshops is immensely instrumental in building a strong foundation and alignment of our associates. ADP is committed towards the overall development of associates which would help us in achieving the progress of the organisation," explains Vinjamoori.

In all, it does seem that organisations have undergone a mind shift as far as making work fun goes. As a potent tool that can help employees bond not just with each other but with the organisation, this is a boon for the HR function.

Having fun at work is an individual's call and you can do well for yourself by choosing to be part of these activities. And as Winston Churchill remarked, "we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

As a mantra, the concept of fun at work may sound more like an oxymoron. However, most organisations today are increasingly focusing on making work a pleasurable experience for their employees. In fact, several organisations also have a CFO. Well that's not the chief financial officer, but chief fun officer! *DH Avenues* checks on what some organisations are doing to maintain work life balance.



CHANGING TIMES Today's organisations involve a lot of fun activities at work. GETTY IMAGES

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